

Coordinated resource management plan 1988

In 1988, Oaks Bottom became Portland's first officially designated wildlife refuge. The City adopted a Management Plan written by Oaks Bottom Coordinated Resource Management Group (CRMG). The plan included a proposed construction of a water control structure just upstream of the Railroad berm culvert. The structure needed to be designed so as to accommodate two broad-based water management objectives, inhibiting the growth of nuisance vegetation while enhancing wildlife habitat, as well as allowing for the specific objective of controlling floodplain mosquitoes (*Aedes vexans*) (Rogers 1994). The structure allows year-round retention of about 100 acres of aquatic habitat in the bottomlands. Without the structure, much of the wetland and aquatic habitat would be lost. Controlling the timing, depth and duration of inundation has increased open water and wetland habitat by reducing invasion of willow (*Salix* spp.), reed canarygrass and purple loosestrife, and has been effective in controlling mosquitoes.

Harza Study 2002

After the listing of local salmonids under the Endangered Species Act, (ESA), Oaks Bottom was one of two areas where the City of Portland initiated investigations to identify habitat improvement projects that would benefit listed species, especially to provide winter off-channel refuge. The purpose of the study is recalled in the Introduction to the MWH study, published in 2002.

The City of Portland, Portland Parks and Recreation in partnership with the Endangered Species Program and the Bureau of Environmental Services, conducted a habitat assessment of Oaks Bottom with a specific sub-objective of evaluating the potential for restoration of off-channel habitat for use by juvenile Willamette River salmonids. ... One of the primary considerations in conducting the assessment was the need to balance potential enhancement of habitat for listed fish species with protection of other natural resource values and human uses. ... These multiple uses were incorporated into the habitat assessment to help ensure a balanced management approach.

Corps Partnership

City staff reviewed projects identified by the MWH study, and have proceeded with several that were consistent with adopted management principles. Key actions included a water quality assessment. In 2002, PP&R formally requested a partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers to: conduct a study under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 to determine the feasibility of an aquatic ecosystem restoration project at Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge. The partnership was underway but funding was halted before a feasibility study was completed.